

RACING AND WAGERING WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**1450. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:**

In relation to yesterday's announcement of the establishment of a new body, Racing and Wagering Western Australia, to control the racing industry -

- (1) Can the minister give an assurance that funding for this body will not be taken from the industry?
- (2) Can the minister explain why it is proposed to have two members nominated by thoroughbred racing, and only one member nominated by each of the harness racing and greyhound bodies?

**Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS replied:**

- (1) The funding for Racing and Wagering Western Australia will come from the activities of that organisation, which will include the operations of the Totalisator Agency Board. Part of the announcement involved the amalgamation and the abolition of a number of government boards, which will result in significant savings. In addition to that, it is envisaged that Racing and Wagering Western Australia will undertake principal club functions, which will result in savings to the industry in carrying out those functions.
- (2) The board of Racing and Wagering Western Australia will comprise nine members, including a chairman. Of those nine members, it is proposed that two will come from the thoroughbred racing industry, one from the harness racing code, and one from the greyhound racing code. The reason for this composition is that it reflects the true state of affairs in the racing industry. For example, in round figures, the thoroughbred racing industry accounts for approximately 60 per cent of the total wagered on racing in Western Australia.

That which is wagered on the harness racing industry is approximately 20 per cent and that which is wagered on the greyhound racing industry is approximately 20 per cent.

Hon Norman Moore: Are they national figures or just state figures?

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: I pointed out a few moments ago that I was dealing with approximate figures, not precise percentage points.

Hon Norman Moore: I am asking whether they are national figures or state figures.

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: I am referring to that which is wagered on the product in Western Australia.

I also point out that the number of people involved in the activities of thoroughbred racing vis-a-vis people involved in the activities of harness and greyhound racing is much higher than the factor of two is to one is to one. The composition of the proposed board recognises the contributions and strengths of the respective codes and what they have to offer to the composition of the board of Racing and Wagering Western Australia. I emphasise that in structuring the board in this way, it cannot be said that any one code has anything like a majority, and it is not intended that the board will function in that manner. The purpose of Racing and Wagering Western Australia is to have the industry as a whole operate as a racing industry, perhaps for the first time in its history. It can then get on with the job of focusing on creating more jobs and wealth for Western Australia rather than, as has been the case unfortunately on the part of quite a few people and bodies in the industry over a long time, being inward looking and fighting over a portion of the cake instead of seeking to grow the cake so that all can prosper.