

# Independent Review into Financial Sustainability and Governance of Racing and Wagering Western Australia

Discussion Paper – January 2026





# Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal peoples as being the traditional custodians of Western Australia. We acknowledge the enduring connection Aboriginal people continue to share with the land, sea and sky through both their ancestral ties and custodianship to Country. We pay our respect to Elders both past and present, and acknowledge the value brought through the collective contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Western Australia.



# Introduction

On 30 December 2025, the Hon Paul Papalia CSC MLA, Western Australia (WA) Minister for Racing and Gaming, announced the Western Australian Government's Financial Sustainability and Governance Review (the Review) of Racing and Wagering Western Australia (RWWA). The Review is conducted pursuant to the [Terms of Reference](#).

A focus of the Review will be financial sustainability in the face of changing conditions, noting that key funding sources for RWWA currently include the Racing Bets Levy, Point of Consumption Tax, and the WA Totaliser Agency Board (TAB) revenues. As such, the Review is intended to identify options to improve the long-term financial sustainability of RWWA. In addition to financial matters, it will also consider the current and future governance of RWWA. The objectives of the Review are to:

- identify a broad and balanced set of revenue-enhancing and cost-management options to support RWWA's long-term financial sustainability;
- review RWWA's governance arrangements, legislative framework and regulatory compliance activities to ensure alignment with government and community expectations; and
- assess the potential impact of financial and governance changes on metropolitan and regional racing industries, associated events and the broader community.

In-scope issues are:

- **Revenue** – To review the composition of RWWA's revenue base, how it has changed over recent years, and opportunities to grow income.
- **Revenue diversification** – To consider options to diversify RWWA's revenue streams.
- **Expenditure** – To review operational and capital expenditure to identify opportunities to adjust the level and/or composition

of spending and ensure spending flexibility to respond to market changes.

- **Balance sheet** – To assess the contribution of RWWA's assets (including assets supported by RWWA) make to achieving the organisation's core objectives.
- **Governance** – To review RWWA's current governance and business practices in relation to legislative obligations, alignment with State Government objectives and community expectations, effectiveness of performance metrics in supporting sustainability and accountability, and potential benefits of aligning the *Racing and Wagering Western Australia Act 2003* (RWWA Act) with the *Government Trading Enterprises Act 2023*.
- **Legislative and regulatory alignment** – To review RWWA's capability and readiness to meet its legislative and regulatory obligations.
- **Community and industry** – To consider how any potential proposed financial and governance changes may affect metropolitan and regional racing and the broader Western Australian community.

Refer to the [Terms of Reference](#) for more detailed information regarding in-scope issues.

The following issues are not within the scope of this Review:

- Participant safety, including personal protective equipment for jockeys (as this is an industry issue most appropriately addressed by the national peak body).
- Workplace health and safety (which is an industry issue and currently being examined by WorkSafe).
- Animal welfare, traceability and related reporting of injuries and deaths.

# | Reviewers

The WA State Government has requested an Independent Review of RWWA to ensure the racing industry has a framework for long-term financial sustainability. The Hon David Templeman and Professor Warren Harding AM have been appointed as Independent Reviewers, who will be supported by the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety, and the Department of Treasury and Finance. The Independent Review will explore ways that RWWA can sustainably support thoroughbred, harness and greyhound racing across WA.

We are aware of the significant impact the sector and the activities of the sector play in local economies, local tourism, jobs and livelihoods of the thousands directly and indirectly involved in the industry. We are committed to delivering an independent and thorough Review to ensure RWWA can continue to effectively and sustainably support the industry in WA. We look forward to consulting widely with stakeholders across the State.

This Review matters: The racing sector contributes \$1.3-1.4bn to WA's economy each year and is estimated to support more than 10,000 jobs, with significant flow on effects to country towns and regional communities. The Review will focus on the long-term financial sustainability as well as fair, ethical and transparent racing and wagering, digital platforms and strong governance and compliance of processes across the thoroughbred, harness and greyhound codes across the State

The purpose of this discussion paper is to provide context to the Independent Review and guide stakeholder responses. The Hon David Templeman and Professor Warren Harding AM are eager to hear from all participants in this important sector and encourage all of those interested to actively engage during the Review.



## Hon David Templeman

Dip Teach (Distinction): Bachelor Education

David Templeman was born in the regional Town of Northam in WA and gained his primary and secondary education there. After graduating from the Western Australian College of Advanced Education (now Edith Cowan University) in 1985 with a Distinction in Teaching, he worked in the regional town of Three Springs then Warnbro and Mandurah.

David was elected to the Western Australian Legislative Assembly in February 2001 and served for over 24 years in State Parliament as the Member for Mandurah. David was a Cabinet Minister in the Carpenter Government and was a senior Minister in the McGowan and Cook Governments from 2017 to 2025.

David has held a number of key Ministerial portfolios including Minister for Child Protection, Environment and Climate Change in the Carpenter Era. His portfolios in the McGowan and Cook Governments included Minister for Local Government, Culture and the Arts, Tourism, Heritage, International Education, and Sport and Recreation.

As Minister, David has overseen a number of key projects in all portfolios. He is particularly proud to have secured a new home for Olympic Hockey at Curtin University and major upgrades to cultural and sporting infrastructure in WA. He led the COVID-19 response for the Arts and Local Government Sectors in the State and secured funding for Perth Film Studios which is due to open in March 2026.

David is honoured to have been appointed as Chair of the Racing and Wagering Western Australia Review along with Professor Warren Harding AM.





## Professor Warren Harding AM

Professor Warren Harding AM has been an Independent Reviewer for a number of important and far reaching Reviews. He was the then Minister for Health Roger Cook's nominee on the Sustainable Health Review and on the recent Electricity Review Board inquiry into Synergy's pricing behaviour in the balancing market. He was a board member of the WA Disability Services Commission during the time of WA's transition into the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). He is a current Federal Cabinet appointed board member of the Australian Digital Health Agency and various other ASX listed and private equity companies.

Professor Harding AM worked as a Managing Partner for over 30 years across international consulting firms, delivering corporate governance, strategic planning, and financial and digital transformations while with Deloitte and Accenture in Asia Pacific. Additionally, he was a former Senior Adviser to McKinsey & Company, and is currently Vice President with Akkodis. He has extensive board experience for multiple organisations and is on the Advisory Board of National Lifespan Health and Wellbeing Research Centre; Advisory Board of StepUp for Research at the University of Sydney, National Expert Reference Group appointed by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, and Chairman of the Alzheimer's WA Board.

He was a Ministerial adviser to a former Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development with 14 years in WA Government including WA Treasury. He has a strong empathy with the Racing and Gaming Industry having attended greyhound races in his birth state of Victoria, harness racing in WA and has a horse property in the Perth foothills.

He understands the importance of good governance and compliance and the economic impact of the industry on jobs, tourism and country communities.

Professor Harding AM holds a Professorship at Macquarie University and Adjunct Professorships at the University of Notre Dame, and Curtin University's School of Business and Faculty of Health. He was awarded First Class Honors from the University of Western Australia, a British Council Scholar at the London School of Economics and was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2023 for his outstanding contributions and service to business, information technology and community health.







## | Racing and Wagering Western Australia

RWWA's charter under the *Racing and Wagering Western Australia Act 2003* (RWWA Act) is to foster the development, promote the welfare and ensure the integrity of metropolitan and country thoroughbred, harness and greyhound racing, in the interests of the long-term viability of the racing industry in WA.

RWWA is a statutory authority with a key role under the RWWA Act to regulate the three racing codes in WA, the Principal Racing Authority (PRA) in WA and works with the PRAs in other jurisdictions to establish and enforce the Australian Rules of Racing (Rules). The Rules have a direct impact on industry participants and intersect with legislation on important matters such as workplace safety.

RWWA also acts as the regulator for racing facilities and events, provides industry development, support programs and policies, and has responsibility for the off-course WA TAB wagering service in WA.

The key funding sources for RWWA include the Racing Bets Levy, Point of Consumption Tax and WA TAB revenues.

# | The racing industry in WA

Racing in Western Australia boasts a rich history, dating back to 1833. Today, more than 190 years on, it is more than an industry – it is a community that spans the breadth of the State, from Kununurra to Albany and every region in between.

The industry contributes more than \$1.3 billion to the WA economy each year and supports more than 10,000 jobs, with the social value of racing extending well beyond its economic contribution, reflected in the connections it fosters, particularly within regional communities.

(Data from Racing and Wagering Western Australia Economic and Social Impact Report prepared by IER Consultants May 2023).

## The industry

49

race clubs in WA

Thoroughbred 37

Standardbred 12

Greyhound 1

475,726

attendances at race meetings

Thoroughbred 293,748

Standardbred 120,450

Greyhound 61,528

## Economic impacts

\$1.3 billion

economic contribution to WA

Direct impact	\$475.2 m
Indirect impact	\$857.3 m

Code	Metro	Regional	Total
Thoroughbred	\$467.9 m	\$398.5 m	\$866.4 m
Standardbred	\$120.2 m	\$120.9 m	\$241.1 m
Greyhound	\$137.3 m	\$87.8 m	\$225.1 m



# 10,249

full time equivalent jobs sustained

Direct impact	4,948
Indirect impact	5,301

Code	Metro	Regional	Total
Thoroughbred	3,633	3,040	6,673
Standardbred	937	910	1,847
Greyhound	1,048	682	1,729

The people

# 20,743

participants and individuals employed

# 4,274

volunteers providing time and skills

Breakdowns	Thoroughbred	Standardbred	Greyhounds	Total
Participants	9,056	3,111	1,303	13,470
Employees	5,314	1,480	479	7,273
Volunteers	1,707	2,338	229	4,274
Total	16,077	6,929	2,011	25,017





# | Initial questions to consider

## **Financial sustainability – Identify a broad and balanced set of revenue-enhancing and cost-management options to support RWWA’s long-term financial sustainability.**

- What industry issues, challenges and trends are impacting RWWA revenue (e.g. a consumer shift towards online and sports betting)?
- What are the most significant cost challenges facing RWWA and how can RWWA mitigate the impact or drive efficiency?
- Are RWWA and clubs digitally ready to innovate and meet new competitor challenges?
- What opportunities exist for increasing RWWA’s return on investment in owned assets, infrastructure and media strategy, which can drive financial sustainability?
- RWWA operates from Racing Bets Levy, Point of Consumption Tax and WA TAB revenues. Are there other sources of revenue generation which RWWA should explore to drive sustainability?

In your response to the above, how could RWWA respond to drive long-term financial sustainability for its operations and its role of supporting the WA racing industry statewide?

## **Governance and regulatory alignment – Review RWWA’s governance arrangements, legislative framework, and regulatory compliance activities to ensure alignment with State Government and community expectations.**

- Are RWWA’s current governance, corporate culture and business practices supporting industry growth, and meeting changing community expectations?
- What changes would you highlight as important to RWWA’s vision, values, mission and strategic objectives to fulfil its current and future role?
- What governance changes are required to support RWWA to ensure fairness and transparency in the industry in line with regulatory requirements, and WA State Government and community expectations
- Where do the opportunities for improvement lie (including club management, board skills and governance) and those that may relate to the broader legislative regulatory and compliance environment?

## **Infrastructure and facilities**

- Are there opportunities/options for better multi-use of infrastructure and innovative ideas for activating or driving returns on physical and land assets for the sustainability of the industry?

## Community, industry and other

- What is needed to stimulate greater prize money and higher turnover; increase the pool of trainers, owners, breeders, and riders; and improve employment in both metropolitan and country communities?
- What additional actions should RWWA take to drive greater regional participation, create racing and employment pathways and elevate the industry to the benefit of all participants? Are there any barriers that need to be considered?
- Are there initiatives in other state or international jurisdictions that provide examples of best practice or new opportunities that you wish to share?
- In your responses to the above questions, please advise how current issues and trends, and/or any proposed changes to RWWA, might impact:
  - the achievement of RWWA’s objectives and its core functions and services (including but not limited to its regulatory functions, industry support and operating the WA TAB);
  - metropolitan and regional racing and associated events and activities; and/or
  - the broader Western Australian community (including social, cultural and economic outcomes).

Are there any other matters related to the Terms of Reference that you would like to comment on? If yes, please advise of any relevant issues and/or opportunities that you would like the Review to note or consider.







## How to make a submission

You are invited to respond to any of the questions in this Discussion Paper or any other matter that you consider is relevant to the Review by emailing your submission to:

[contact@racingreview.wa.gov.au](mailto:contact@racingreview.wa.gov.au)

As your feedback forms part of a public consultation process, the WA State Government may quote from your comments in future publications including relevant consultation summaries. If you prefer that your name or your submission is not published in this way, please indicate this in your submission.

All submissions made in response to this paper may be subject to freedom of information requests. It is not possible to guarantee that your submission will not be released in whole or in part. Please do not include any personal or confidential information that you do not wish to become publicly available.

Written submissions must be received by midnight Sunday 8 March 2026 for this initial stage of the Review.

## What happens next?

The Independent Reviewers will be engaging with the wider racing sector and relevant stakeholders via one-to-one meetings, group meetings and forums, as the review progresses.

To stay up to date visit the Review webpage:

(page pending)

For questions about the Review, contact us at:

[contact@racingreview.wa.gov.au](mailto:contact@racingreview.wa.gov.au)

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