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RECORD \$174 MILLION INVESTMENT - SECURING THE FUTURE OF NSW THOROUGHBRED RACING

The Keneally Government today announced up to \$174 million in funding to secure the future of thoroughbred racing in NSW – and protect jobs in the sector.

The record funding would enable major upgrades to Rosehill and Randwick racecourses – following the merger of the Australian Jockey Club and Sydney Turf Club.

Mr Greene revealed the NSW Government has given in-principle support to the merger of Sydney's metropolitan clubs and the drafting of necessary legislation.

"This is the biggest step in securing the future of the NSW racing history," NSW Racing Minister Kevin Greene said.

"NSW is the home of racing in Australia. Put simply, the investment in spectator facilities and reforms to NSW racing are essential if we are to secure the future of tens of thousands of jobs, grow one of our state's most significant industries and continue to attract major events to Sydney.

"The NSW racing industry boasts more than 50,000 participants - the highest in Australia.

"Trainers, jockeys, bookmakers, stablehands, associated maintenance, hospitality, security and other staff are the lifeblood of our industry and depend on its sustainability for their livelihood.

"The NSW Government and I won't let these hard workers fall behind," he said.

Mr Greene said a proportion of the proceeds of a new simulated racing game will be used for the funding.

"The NSW Government's \$174 million funding package includes:

A grant of \$24 million for the merged race club entity to fund renovation and infrastructure improvements at Rosehill Gardens, including:

- Refurbishment and alterations to the Fleming stand on all levels
- Vehicular Access Bridge and Tunnel Link to Infield Carpark
- New main entry and pedestrian railway bridge from James Ruse Drive
- New pedestrian bridge over James Ruse Drive
- Demountable Infield Concert Stage & Infrastructure and a new Infield Screen

The NSW Government will also establish a Thoroughbred Racing Development Fund which will allow the racing industry to secure a \$150 million loan. This loan will fund the redevelopment of Randwick racecourse, delivering:

- Two new state-of-the-art Grandstands - increasing seating capacity by 112 per cent and providing first class spectator facilities, function space, restaurants, corporate boxes;

- A new 4,500 seat multi-purpose 'Theatre of the Horse' parade ring - enabling the public to have a 'front seat race day experience.'

Racing NSW Chairman Alan Brown said, "This initiative of the Keneally Government will provide the means by which racing in Sydney will again become the place to be, with world class facilities at both Royal Randwick and Rosehill Gardens.

Ron Finemore Chairman of the AJC said, "Sydney Racing has been looking for positive news and the Keneally Government has today delivered it by the truckload. The AJC Board unanimously endorses the NSW Government proposal as the right way to secure the future and grow one of our state's largest industries."

Sydney Turf Club Chairman Bill Picken said "The funding will allow construction of world class facilities at Sydney's two icon racecourses and will offer race fans from all over Sydney, from interstate and from overseas, the opportunity to enjoy premier racing from the two great CBD's of Sydney in Parramatta and Sydney city."

Gordon Lindley Chairman Racing NSW Country said "We all know that country is the grass roots of racing but the centrepiece is in Sydney. The development of world class facilities will enable racing to be showcased at the highest level. This in turn will have a massive economic flow on for all thoroughbred racing clubs in NSW."

Funding - Trackside

Mr Greene said a proportion of revenue from the simulated racing game in TAB venues called Trackside will be paid into the fund. Based on TAB projections and with the inclusion of a proportion of NSW Government wagering taxes, this is expected to amount to around \$12m million a year (after three years) which will fund loan repayments.

"Revenue from the fund will be administered in accordance with a Deed of Arrangement to be executed between myself, Racing NSW, Tabcorp and the new merged race club.

"It is important to note that the Harness and Greyhound codes will still receive their share of funds as per existing arrangements.

"These initiatives recognise racing as a significant employer in NSW and an industry that injects more than \$1 billion a year into the State's economy. In 2008/09 the Government received wagering taxes on racing events of over \$152 million.

"Trackside enables players to place TAB-style bets on the outcome of simulated thoroughbred, harness and greyhound races shown on in-venue television screens.

"It has been designed to closely resemble the normal TAB racing and wagering experience with punters writing their selections on betting tickets and presenting them to a TAB computer betting terminal for payment. The usual win, place, quinella and trifecta options are available for each race.

"We're now reclassifying Trackside as a wagering product which more accurately fits its design and market. It also brings NSW into line with Victoria where Trackside already operates in TAB outlets as a wagering product, providing invaluable support to its racing industry.

"The game's reclassification is also consistent with a recommendation made by Alan Cameron in his independent review of wagering and supported by NSW Racing authorities," he said.

Media contact: Priscilla Armstrong-Guirguis 0402 320 283