



Office of the  
**Racing Integrity**  
Commissioner

# MEDIA STATEMENT

Friday, 25 March 2022

## **Independent review into Victorian racing industry victim support and complaint processes**

The Racing Integrity Commissioner has today announced an independent review (the Review) into Victorian racing industry victim support and complaint processes.

The announcement follows a joint referral made today by the three Victorian racing controlling bodies – Racing Victoria Limited, Harness Racing Victoria and Greyhound Racing Victoria – requesting the Commissioner establish an independent opportunity for victims of sexual harassment and sexual or physical assault within the Victorian racing industry to report their experiences, and to review the industry's current processes and systems for handling such complaints.

The Commissioner welcomes the controlling bodies' referral and the opportunity it brings to gain a better understanding of the experiences and expectations of people who currently work, or have previously worked, within the Victorian thoroughbred, harness or greyhound racing codes. The Commissioner considers the Review will provide an opportunity to ensure that all racing workplaces are safe and respectful, and the industry's processes and systems for identifying, preventing and handling issues of sexual harassment and physical or sexual assault represent best practice.

It is intended that the Review will inquire into any systemic issues. It will therefore not investigate or make findings about individual allegations. However, it will provide clear referral and access pathways to counselling and other supports for all who need it, including specialist trauma counselling, and to law enforcement and other agencies, for those who seek it and as appropriate.

The Commissioner will engage a suitably qualified and experienced expert to lead the Review and ensure it is conducted with the required sensitivity, confidentiality and independence.

The Commissioner will now consult with the Victorian racing industry about how best to undertake this important task, including determining the expert appointment and terms of reference. An announcement about these matters will be made in due course. It is expected that the Review will commence in June 2022 and the Commissioner intends that an interim report be provided to him by December 2022.

Anyone wishing to participate in the Review can register their interest by contacting the Office of the Racing Integrity Commissioner at [review@racingintegrity.vic.gov.au](mailto:review@racingintegrity.vic.gov.au).

The Commissioner acknowledges that discussing sexual harassment and sexual or physical assault can cause distress and discomfort and has established an independent and confidential telephone support line for all current and former Victorian racing industry participants who have experienced sexual harassment and sexual or physical assault in a Victorian racing industry workplace. The support line will provide referral to confidential, trauma-informed counselling services and other specialist services, and can be contacted by calling: 1300 896 049.

A list of other services that provide counselling and others forms of support is available under the *Accessing support* section on the next page.

## **Quotes attributable to the Racing Integrity Commissioner, Sean Carroll**

*“Since commencing in my role 12 months ago, I have become aware of a number of historical abuse, harassment and physical or sexual assault complaints across the wider Victorian racing industry, including more recent matters and those that date back decades. These incidents are not confined to one racing code alone.*

*“I have been in dialogue with the controlling bodies about these issues to determine an industry-wide approach that ensures we have adequate and appropriate processes, systems, supports and referral pathways to respond to them.*

*“The time is right for the industry to better understand our past, reach out to all who have been affected, listen to them, learn from their experiences, offer them support and improve how we respond to them – both individually and in the workplace.*

*“The Review will ensure that we have best practice processes and systems in place to provide safe and respectful workplaces for everyone who works in the Victorian racing industry.*

*“I acknowledge the Victorian racing controlling bodies’ commitment to supporting the Review and recognition that what happens away from the track is as important to the integrity of racing as what occurs on the track.”*

## **Accessing support**

The following services provide specialist counselling and others forms of support.

### **If your situation is urgent**

If you or anyone you know is in immediate danger, or a crime is currently occurring, please call police on Triple Zero (000) or contact [your local police station](#).

### **Report a criminal offence**

For non-urgent matters, you can report a crime by contacting the Police Assistance Line on 131 444 or, if you wish to remain anonymous, contact [Crime Stoppers](#) on 1800 333 000.

## **Support line for current and former Victorian racing industry participants**

### *Victorian Racing Industry Support Line*

An independent and confidential telephone service established by the Racing Integrity Commissioner to support all current and former Victorian racing industry participants. The support line provides referral to confidential, trauma-informed counselling services for people who have experienced a serious incident in a workplace in the Victorian racing industry. The service can also provide supported referrals to other specialist services.

Ph: 1300 896 049

## **Sexual assault, harassment and violence support services**

### *1800 Respect*

A confidential counselling, information and support service that operates 24-hours a day, 7 days a week for people who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment

Ph: 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)

Website: <https://www.1800respect.org.au/>

### *Sexual Assault Crisis Line*

Crisis Line: 1800 806 292 (free call)

Email: [ahcasa@thewomens.org.au](mailto:ahcasa@thewomens.org.au)

Website: [www.sacl.com.au](http://www.sacl.com.au)

### *CASA*

Website: [www.casa.org.au](http://www.casa.org.au) for a list of Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault

## **Mental health support services**

### *Lifeline*

24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention

Ph: 13 11 14

Website: <https://www.lifeline.org.au/>

### *beyondblue*

Mental health support

Ph: 1300 224 636

Website: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

### *Headspace*

Supports young people aged between 12 and 25 years of age

Ph: 1800 650890

Website: <https://headspace.org.au/>

### *Kids Helpline*

Counselling service for those aged between 5 and 25 years of age

Ph: 1800 55 1800

Website: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

### *Suicide Call Back Service*

Ph: 1300 659 467

Website: <https://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au/>

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### **For media enquiries contact:**

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