



EFA NSW

Equestrian Federation of Australia – NSW Branch

**The impact of Equine Influenza on
one state sporting body in NSW**

Presented by Wendy Cohen, CEO

The EFA NSW – Who Are We?

- State Sporting Body which makes up part of the Equestrian Federation of Australia, which is the peak body for Olympic equestrian sports in Australia
- The EFA is the body recognised by the Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI) in Australia
- The EFA administers dressage, jumping, eventing, vaulting, driving and show horse. We have over 120 affiliated clubs and currently almost 4000 registered horses competing
- The EFA has approximately 7,000 members, making us the largest EFA branch in the country
- The office, located at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre, comprises of three permanent and three part time staff



Management of the Crisis – The First Weeks

- 25th August 2007 the state went into lockdown. EFA NSW communicated this information immediately through website
- EFA NSW Board convened emergency meetings to discuss strategy
- EFA NSW members locked down in Moonbi, Parkes, Condobolin and Warwick (Qld), the EFA quickly mobilised to get emergency funds to those affected
- Total of up to \$600 per member was issued, a total of \$47,000 distributed
- EFA NSW Representatives met with both Federal and State Ministers
- Engaged the services of issues and media management company, Wilkinson Media
- Scheduled forum at RAS involving stakeholders from across the non-racing sector and DPI representative



Media Campaign

- Managed by the CEO and Wilkinsons, the media campaign was crucial to raising the public profile of equestrian alongside the racing industry
- The most pressing media issue in early stages was - Olympic prospects. Press conference held, followed by many radio and press interviews
- Wilkinsons lobbying power was instrumental in securing initial meetings with Federal and State ministers – which would prove invaluable moving through the crisis
- Media campaign was able to elevate the profile of the non-racing horse community to match the racing sector momentarily, culminating in extensive coverage of the 'forgotten victims' of EI at the EFA NSW organised forum



Media Campaign



- Continuous media interviews throughout the first few months of EI – athletes, Chair, CEO
- Continued to use website and advise of zones across state. Worked closely DPI to communicate zones and movement restrictions
- Was it a Success?
 - Lead segment on all TV (free to air and Sky TV)
 - Extensive press and radio coverage – three months
 - Raised awareness with govt. and govt. departs
 - The media campaign was successful but not realistic to match racing.

Vaccinations



- As early as the vaccine was available, 100 high performance EFA horses were vaccinated to protect their chances of Olympic representation
- Later in the crisis it became very evident our horses needed access to vaccines as much as race horses – lobbied for access to vaccine, was given vaccine for up to 3000 competition horses in NSW
- With the assistance and support of NSW DPI, these vaccines were administered by team of vets, including Dr Derek Major
- Administration and tracking of these vaccines occurred out of Agnes Banks Equine Clinic with the financial support of the EFA NSW
- The “Team” – David Lawrence, Judy Fasher, Derek Major, with the valued support of the NSW DPI. Office staff who collated lists of eligible horses

Federal Government Relief Package

CHAPs

- CHAPs for non-racing horses was, in part, a result of strong relationship with Federal Minister, Peter McGauran MP. Part of initial \$110M rescue package, repeated with Phase Two, worth \$117M, then with three weeks worth of Phase Three
- Commercial Horse Assistance Payments to all horses in non-racing sector who derived an income - \$20 per day
- EFA NSW undertook to deliver relief funds to entire non-racing sector in NSW
- Set up 8 person call centre
- Worked seven months, through phases one, two and three to deliver over **\$26 million to over 1400 recipients** across NSW.
- Call centre and office involved.
- Excellent working relationship with DAFF
- Rigorous conditions of funding deed met, appeals panel, spot checking, extensive Commonwealth audit
- Final work completed June 2008



Australian Government

**Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry**

Olympic Preparations



- Cancellation of Olympic qualifiers and many warm up events including;
 - Sydney International 3DE 2007
 - Adelaide Four Star Event 2007
 - ISS Summer Jumping Classic 2007
 - Australian Dressage Champs 2007, including Asia Pacific Qualifier
- Olympic horses' health threatened
- Many Olympic hopefuls chose to travel overseas to gain qualification and hopefully selection



Road To Recovery

- Return of the Horse
 - Media Launch, March 2008
 - Held April 17 to May 3, 2008
 - Jumping, eventing, dressage, interschools and show horse
 - Enabled Olympic qualifying opportunities
 - Over 1000 horses and 880 riders competed over the month-long series of competitions
 - Major Sponsor – NSW Government – Thank You!
 - Extensive media coverage/marketing



The Impact of EI on the EFA NSW



■ Negatives

- Cancellation of events and standstill
- Severe economic impact on entire horse community
- Horses' health
- Industry in turmoil
- EFA NSW capacity to operate 100% for all members and external stakeholders
- Not all could access vaccines
- Threat to Olympic prep
- Disparity with racing
- Less approximately 400 members in 2008

■ Positivesyes there were some!

- Galvanised the industry – displayed resilience
- Established EFA potential as industry body
- Proved capacity to respond to crises
- Established progressive links with government/NSW DPI/DAFF
- Held ROH – flow on for multi discipline events
- NSW riders part of high achieving Olympic Team