

IT'S TIME FOR ACTION ON JUMPS RACING

RSPCA calls for an end to jumps racing in South Australia

With near misses for two horses at Oakbank on the weekend, RSPCA South Australia is renewing its calls for the cruel 'sport' of jumps racing to be banned.

Chief Executive Officer Tim Vasudeva said that it's just sheer luck that neither horse was killed, or a jockey badly injured, from the horrific falls on the weekend.

"The severe nature of the falls - including Spying on You diving head-first into the ground after stumbling in the Great Eastern Steeplechase - demonstrates that jumps racing cannot be made 'safe'," Mr Vasudeva said.

Six horses have died as a result of jumps racing at the Oakbank track alone since 2010. This is a telling statistic given that the Oakbank racecourse only hosts three jumps racing days per year.

Black Moon was the latest Oakbank casualty only two years ago, when he was euthanased after being fatally injured in a trial during the week preceding the Carnival.

Since then, ten-year-old gelding Trenchtown also died as a result of a jump racing injury, this time at Morphetville, in July last year. He was the 16th horse to have died in South Australia as a result of jumps races since 2009.

Mr Vasudeva said that as the leading animal welfare organisation in the State, RSPCA South Australia opposes the use of horses in jumps racing.

"The risk of a horse suffering serious injury or death as a result of participating in these events makes jumps racing unacceptable," he said.

"Horses and their jockeys are forced to clear jumps at least a metre high, in a pack, at

speed - and in some events after running nearly five kilometres.

“Both falls at Oakbank on the weekend were in the latter stage of the race indicating the fatigue that these horses experience.

“The current inquiry into jumps racing is yet to release its findings, but the evidence is clear that jumps racing needs to stop now.

“In our modern society, it is simply unacceptable to stand by and watch, while horses are forced to run a dangerous gauntlet year after year - all in the name of ‘sport’.

“We call on the South Australian Parliament to finally take action to end jumps racing in South Australia.”

A 2006 University of Melbourne study found a horse competing in a jumps race is nearly 19 times more likely to die in an event compared to a flat racing horse.

South Australia and Victoria are the only two Australian states which still hold jumps races. New South Wales banned jumps racing under animal welfare legislation in 1997.

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