



ADELAIDE CUP HOLIDAY CHANGE
16 October 2002

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Thoroughbred racing is well patronised across South Australia. It makes sense that a region be allowed to choose another day for a holiday rather than the Adelaide Cup Day. A change in the day could assist a great number of people, including families, to enjoy together a region's special event. The event on Eyre Peninsula to which I refer today is the Port Lincoln Racing Cup Carnival held annually in March. The week-long carnival program provides two traditional days of racing currently held on a Tuesday and Thursday, combined with a host of popular non-race day activities, events and functions.

Racing is at Ravensdale Park racecourse which was established in 1948 when local racing was relocated to this site. It is a magnificent racecourse with extensive lawned areas and views to the sea. Other businesses have made use of the facilities to stage events such as trade promotions. Not only is it a picturesque location but the racing facilities are also first class, with TAB and bookmaker options for patrons. Country racing is renowned for its crowds, social festivities and exciting thoroughbred racing. The profile and interest in thoroughbred racing in the Port Lincoln region over the years continues to move from strength to strength with increased attendances, increased club membership, strong fields and, of course, the excellent on-course facilities and amenities already mentioned.

The economic threads of the sport can be traced through the region's economy. A recent estimate indicates that Port Lincoln Racing Club generates around \$4.9 million into the economy, including 347 full-time, part-time and casual jobs. In 1999, a survey of Port Augusta Racing Club estimated the value of the racing industry to Port Augusta at about \$2.5 million per annum. The value to Port Lincoln is considerably higher because of the greater number of race meetings per year, the greater number of trainers based within Port Lincoln and the adjoining areas, and the greater number of horses trained within Port Lincoln and the adjoining areas.

Direct beneficiaries of the racing industry are the trainers, stable hands, jockeys, apprentices, course workers such as starters, bar staff, totalisator staff, veterinarians, feed suppliers, transport operators and more. Indirect beneficiaries include farmers who provide feed to the suppliers, tyre retailers, fuel outlets, hotels, motels, tourist operators and so on.

The Port Lincoln Racing Club provides racing at a metropolitan standard—in fact, many entries are horses that normally race in metropolitan and nearby country meetings. Evidence for the excellence of racing comes from the high percentage of patrons who attend the Port Lincoln Cup Carnival from interstate and intrastate, and even overseas can be included since the world renowned horse racing enthusiast, Robert Sangster, has visited several times. I mentioned that the economic threads of the sport can be traced throughout the region's economy. The Port Lincoln Cup Carnival is a major tourist attraction. The very high occupancy levels experienced throughout the hospitality sector before, during and after the carnival attest to this fact.

The cup carnival attracts record crowds, providing the City of Port Lincoln with considerable and significant revenue. Between 6 000 and 7 000 people attend, of which only 40 per cent are attributed to the local region. This puts the Port Lincoln Racing Club in a unique and difficult situation. The success of the carnival in attracting visitors from outside the region leads to shortages of available accommodation not only in Port Lincoln but throughout the region during the cup carnival week. This is compounded by the restricted number of passengers that the airlines flying into Port Lincoln Airport can handle in one day, even when extra flights are scheduled. These two factors

illustrate the difficulty that the Port Lincoln Racing Club has in further developing attendance and the economic impact of the carnival.

The current holiday status for Adelaide Cup Day bears no value or importance for the community of Port Lincoln as a celebration of thoroughbred racing. The transfer of the holiday to the Thursday of the carnival, or perhaps to the Friday to give a long weekend, would have a great impact locally. I understand that in Victoria no public holiday for the Melbourne Cup exists in many regions. Therefore, it is believed that allowing regions in South Australia to vary the Adelaide Cup Day holiday to better suit their own events would have no effect on the Adelaide Cup. The sport of thoroughbred racing would benefit substantially from regions being allowed to proclaim a holiday on the day that their most prestigious race is run. A series of such events across the state would be a significant tourist attraction.

The Port Lincoln Racing Club seeks the reinstatement of amendments to the Holidays Act 1910 to allow it to proceed with an alternate holiday to Adelaide Cup Day with the utmost confidence that it would be an asset to the region. To this end, I support the bill but ask that an amendment be allowed to allow the City of Port Lincoln and other councils on Eyre Peninsula to be able to make application to have Port Lincoln Cup Day as their alternative holiday.