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December 23, 2010

Notice to the Industry

Additional information - 2011 Ontario Racing Program

With the release of the Director's Decision on the 2011 Ontario Racing Program, the Ontario Racing Commission (ORC) committed to providing information to the racing community on an ongoing basis. The initial details of the implementation stage of the 2011 Ontario Racing Program were released in a Notice to the Industry distributed on December 17, 2010. The ORC today provided additional information summarizing progress this week.

As advised in that Notice, an ORC implementation team is moving forward with the technical details of the program. While working to chart and define specific goals and targets, the team will be in contact with industry stakeholders and review and monitor the input received. Team members will be able to respond to the questions and comments of horse people and racetracks.

The ORC notes that many comments posted on industry web sites express some concerns on how the program will unfold. Others are uncomfortable with moving away from the 'tried and true ways' of the traditional local track perspective. This is understandable and the ORC wishes to remind the racing community that these 'provincial approach' modifications were formulated to improve racing opportunities.

The ORC recognizes that some people in racing will need ample time to adjust and take advantage of these improvements. For that reason, 2011 will be a transition year for horse racing in Ontario. Further modifications and enhancements to racing will be introduced on a phased-in basis.

The meeting with Race Secretaries referred to in the December 17 Notice will take place in early January, and will focus on the topic of race conditions, preference, as well as related purse discussions. Secretaries will be asked for their comments on the best way to implement these changes.

By mid-January, there will be a meeting of representatives from horse people's associations, racetracks, and breeders – as well as OHRIA and Standardbred Canada – to review the implementation progress to date. It is expected that these implementation sessions will take place quarterly to advance the delivery of this provincial approach to racing.

John L. Blakney
Executive Director