

RPSBS LTD NATIONAL CHAIR REPORT 2017- 2018

It is my honour to present the Riding Pony Stud Book Society Ltd. Board of Directors' Chair Report for 2017 – 18.

The RPSBS Board has seen only one resignation by a Director since August 2016. This stability has given the Directors time to know each other's strengths and interests and this has been reflected in prodigious amount of work that has been accomplished by the Board in the last 2 years. We have accomplished this while at the same time reducing the Board meetings from two to one day meetings enabling some directors to fly in and out on the one day. I am sure the members appreciate the dedication and commitment of this group.

We have been fortunate to have had the Arabian Horse Society office as the provider of our registry and secretariat services from October 2016. The services being provided by Helen Dohan and her office staff have been exemplary and we have appreciated the support provided by members of the Arabian Horse Society Board. Our contract with the Arabian Horse Society is up for renewal in October and the Board, on your behalf, will be wanting to negotiate a contract for the next 2 years or beyond.

Achievements during the last year include:

- The Judge's Policy which I introduced at last year's AGM has been finalised and been operating effectively now for 12 months. One change has been made and that is The Working With Children's checks for Judges is no longer compulsory as it has been deemed that the contact with children by Judges and Stewards is coincidental in nature;
- States have been allocated \$1500 each for Youngstock Initiatives in their states. States will report back to the Board on how the money was spent and their assessment as to the effectiveness of the program. The Board is constantly seeking ways of supporting our breeders and encouraging Riding Pony owners to become breeders.
- Four classes at the Equestrian Australia Nationals and four at the Show Horse Council Australasia Grand National were selected for \$200 RPSBS vouchers that were awarded to both the owner and breeder of the highest placed qualifying Riding Pony exhibit in each of the selected classes. For the owner to be eligible, the Riding Pony had to be registered, entered in the name/s of the registered owner and the owner had to be a financial member. The Breeder was eligible even if the owner was not financial.
- In response to welfare of the horse concerns a new showing rule has been introduced: "All animals are to be exhibited in accordance with description as noted on their registration record with RPSBS including, but not limited to, colour, markings, and brands."
- An additional paragraph has been added to the RPSBS Heat Policy making it compulsory for children to remove their jackets if the temperature is over 35°C.
- Joining fees and late renewal fees have been abolished. Where memberships have lapsed for 3 or more years, past members may re-join for 60% of the annual fee and any memberships made after May 1 each year will be financial until June 30 of the following year.
- The Board has undertaken a review of all the Policies and Procedures of the Society over the past 18 months, updating most and attempting to simplify things for the volunteer committees. These remain a "work in progress" and will now undergo a 2018 review in an attempt to resolve any issues still occurring.

The Constitution of the Society is also on the agenda for review in 2018. The Board welcomes any suggestions for amendment and improvement to these documents from members and state committees but would ask that these be received in writing with specific changes noted and reasons behind such requests. Such submissions should be returned to the Secretary prior to the 10th August in order that they may be collated and distributed to the Board for consideration prior to the next Board meeting.

As mentioned earlier, the 2018 Riding Pony Annual will be the last of 8 Annuals Eleanor and Liz will have produced together. This Annual is being designed to be a valuable, comprehensive reference source for our members. Despina Mitrakis of Show Pony Graphics, who is responsible for the production of the Annual, has agreed to take on the role

of RPSBS Annual Advertising Co-ordinator. Her enthusiasm and knowledge in this area is proving to be invaluable. As a reference source for our members, it is hoped that the Annual will remain on the coffee table and not get filed in the bookshelves. It will contain directories for stallions, breeders, producers, showing suppliers; so no matter what your involvement is; organizing shows, buying a pony, looking for a stallion, finding a producer for your pony; the information will be there at your fingertips.

Despina, of course, has also been responsible for the design and maintenance of the RPSBS web site.

Congratulations must go to the NSW RPSBS committee for successfully negotiating the return of RPSBS Youngstock classes to Canberra Royal and to the Queensland committee for negotiating with Brisbane Royal to fund the costs of having an interstate national judge to adjudicate their RPSBS classes. The Queensland committee also needs to be congratulated on negotiating with Toowoomba Royal to have them host their RPSBS ridden Champion of Champions classes. A special mention must be made of Catherine James, the Toowoomba ringmaster, who has been a strong supporter of our Society for many years and who has made this possible.

Financially it has been a positive year for our Riding Pony Society due to a significant decrease in expenditure. A very, very special thanks must go to the Arabian Horse Society Board, Helen Dohan and her friendly, professional and efficient staff. However, income from memberships and registrations has decreased. We are all acutely aware that memberships and registrations have been in decline for many years. Perhaps the most accurate measure is obtained by comparing the income derived from memberships and registrations from year to year. The Company Treasurer will discuss this in her report.

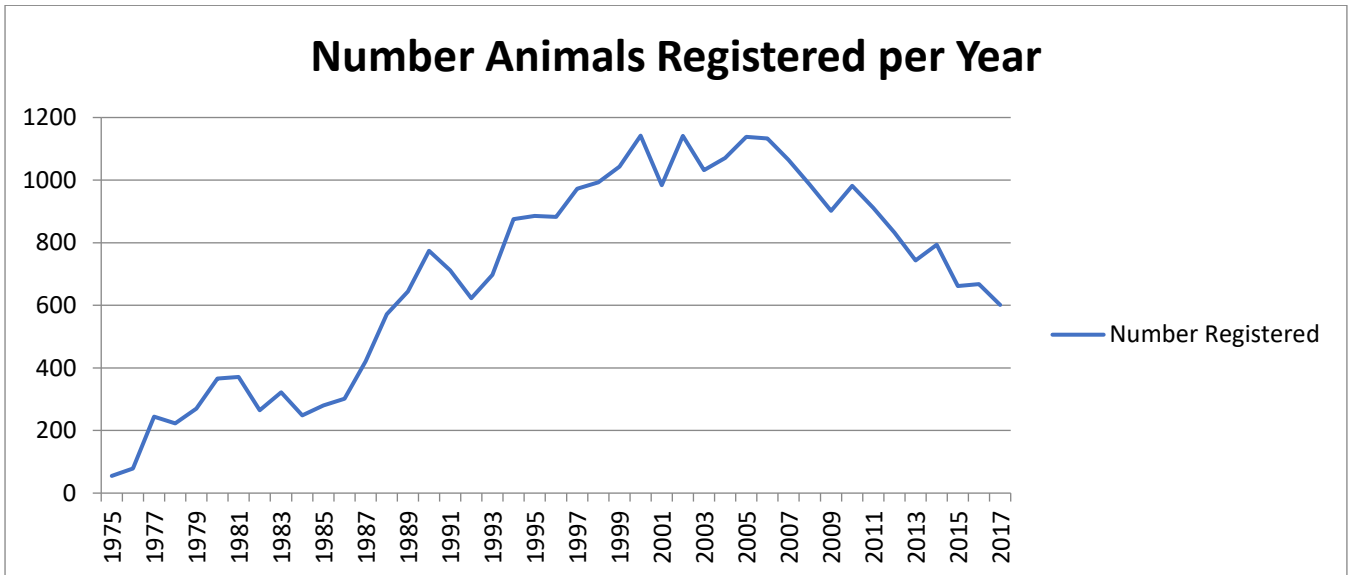
RPSBS Membership data

STATE	2016	2017	2018
NSW	494	568	524
QLD	249	254	250
SA	125	133	146
TAS	48	68	58
VIC	464	492	498
WA	167	165	142
TOTALS	1547	1680	1618

Unfortunately, the data previously was based on a database greatly in need of repair. Prior to Helen repairing our data, our database was showing a 2016 membership of 2280 when it was actually 1547.

This graph, unfortunately speaks for itself and is a general problem being faced by all Societies. In view of the fact that less people will be breeding due to the current widespread drought the trend is likely to continue for a while yet.

Number Animals Registered per Year



RPSBS Registration/Transfer data (July- May)

Year	2014 – 15	2015 – 16	2016 – 17	2017 - 18
Registrations	703	609	599	495
Transfers	706	717	671	456

Another set of interesting statistics I discovered whilst researching for this report is the number of foals recorded. Interesting for 2 reasons: The effect on numbers registered by the introduction of the rule requiring registration in the year of birth and secondly that one suspects there are a significant number of foals being bred that are still not being registered.

RPSBS Foal Registrations

Year	2014 – 15	2015 – 16	2016 – 17	2017 - 18
Foals Registered	51	43	58	60

These statistics do highlight that our Society is facing challenging times and your Board of Directors is acutely aware that we cannot just sit back and expect everything will be okay, and, as it was in the past. We are looking for new ideas and ways to keep our members and entice those, who have left, to return. They are definitely not going to return just to support our Society. We have to produce a product that they want. Our breeders have to produce animals that have both quality and temperament. Our Judges have to be beyond reproach. Our committees have to be focused on serving their state members to the best of their ability and our directors have to provide the necessary leadership and support to breeders, members and committees. This is our challenge.

Thank you

Mike Smith

National Chair