

PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

MEDIA RELEASE

Equine Centre funding timed to perfection

21 September 2004

Member for Tamworth Peter Draper today welcomed the much-anticipated Federal Government's announcement of \$6million toward the National Equine and Livestock Centre.

"I firmly believed it was only a matter of time until the Federal Government came through with the funding as the value of the livestock and equine industry to the region's economy was consistently made evident through the staging of major events such as the National Cutting Horse Association Futurity, The Quarter Horse Nationals and the ABCRA rodeo and campdraft finals," Mr Draper said.

Mr Draper said it was not surprising the announcement was made on the eve of the Federal election with the Coalition clearly aiming for leverage in the delivery of such a major project to the region.

"The people who can't be overlooked are the user groups who worked tirelessly and achieved a united approach to ensure it was Tamworth that would continue to attract major national horse and livestock events and not regional centres such as Toowoomba or Dubbo.

"The excitement surrounding this project is tangible and I congratulate Federal Member for New England Tony Windsor on his unswayed commitment to the project through the years. The National Livestock and Equine Centre board, the New England North West Area Consultative Committee, the former Tamworth City Council and the user groups also remained committed, patient and focussed on the project despite the drawn out process to fruition.

Mr Draper also congratulated the NSW Government on its early commitment of \$3.35 million to the centre. This funding commitment took on greater significance when it became untied from any Federal Government contribution during a visit to Tamworth by the Premier Bob Carr in April this year.

"The State Government recognised the potential of such a facility early on and I'm pleased that the Federal Government has now recognised the importance of this major project to Tamworth and the surrounding communities," he said.

End Release

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